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Letter dated 27 September 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the forty-eighth monthly report of the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex). The report covers the period from 23 August to 22 September 2017.

With regard to the 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, the work to confirm the current condition of the two remaining above-ground facilities is continuing. The completion of that work is necessary for the full implementation of resolution 2118 (2013), and I look forward to further progress in this regard.

Turning to the outstanding issues relating to the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic, I welcome the fact that the high-level consultations between OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic were held, as scheduled, from 16 to 18 September 2017. It is my hope that these consultations will produce a tangible outcome by way of resolving the outstanding issues related to the initial declaration, thereby increasing the confidence of the international community that the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic has been fully eliminated, as required by resolution 2118 (2013). I urge the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with OPCW towards that goal.

The OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to study all available information related to allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. In this regard, impunity cannot be tolerated, and I repeat my call for those responsible for the use of chemical weapons to be held accountable and reaffirm that the use of such weapons under any circumstances, and by any party, is similarly intolerable.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism is continuing its in-depth investigations into the incidents involving the use of chemical weapons in Umm Hawsh and Khan Shaykhun. It will report its substantive findings on the two incidents in October 2017. I reiterate my utmost confidence that the present report will demonstrate the implementation by the Joint Investigative Mechanism of its mandate in an independent, impartial and objective manner. I stress the previous determination by the Security Council that the use of chemical weapons anywhere constitutes a threat

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to international peace and security and a serious violation of international law. I urge the Security Council to demonstrate the unity necessary to ensure that those who have used chemical weapons are held accountable, in order to deter and put an end to those inhumane acts, for which there can be no impunity.

I thank all Member States for their cooperation and support for the work of the Mechanism.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled "Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Executive Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 23 August to 22 September 2017 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet Üzümcü

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Note by the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

Background

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.

2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities" (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015) noting the Director-General's intent to include reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) in Syria, along with information on the Council's discussion thereof, as part of the monthly reporting pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Similarly, the Council, at its Eighty-First Session, adopted a decision entitled "Report by the Director-General Regarding the Declaration and Related Submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-81/DEC.4, dated 23 March 2016), noting the Director-General's intent to provide information on the implementation of that decision.

4. The Council, at its Eighty-Third Session, adopted a decision entitled "OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism Reports on Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016). In subparagraph 12(a) of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision and incorporate information regarding the implementation of this decision into his monthly reporting to the United Nations Security Council, through the United Nations Secretary-General, regarding EC-M-33/DEC.1".

5. This, the forty-eighth monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to the period from 23 August 2017 to 22 September 2017.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

6. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:

(a) The Secretariat has verified the destruction of 25 of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. During the period under review, the Secretariat has continued the preparatory work

to carry out an initial inspection to confirm the current condition of the last two stationary above-ground facilities.

(b) On 14 September 2017, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its forty-sixth monthly report (EC-86/P/NAT.4, dated 15 September 2017) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

7. As stated in previous reports, all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have now been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decisions EC-81/DEC.4 and EC-83/DEC.5

8. As reported previously, an invitation was sent to the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, H.E. Dr Faisal Mekdad, and his delegation, to resume high-level consultations to clarify all outstanding issues regarding the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with Council decision EC-81/DEC.4 and paragraph 6 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5. The Director-General will report separately to the Council on those consultations, which took place at the OPCW Headquarters from 16 to 18 September 2017.

9. In accordance with paragraph 11 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, the Secretariat has continued planning for the second round of inspections at the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC) in the Syrian Arab Republic, to be conducted in the second half of 2017.

10. In accordance with subparagraph 12(a) of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, a report on the status of implementation of that decision (EC-86/DG.21, dated 21 September 2017) was submitted to the States Parties.

Other activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

11. The Steering Committee, which is comprised of representatives of the OPCW, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the Syrian Arab Republic, met in Beirut, Lebanon, from 24 to 26 August 2017, to review the status of ongoing activities in light of the tripartite agreement (between UNOPS, the OPCW, and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic) and the contribution agreement (between the OPCW and UNOPS). During that meeting, the Syrian Arab Republic enquired about the possibility to convert one of the two remaining stationary above-ground facilities for purposes not prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention"). The Secretariat recalled the provisions of the Convention concerning the conditions for such conversion, including the requirement for a State Party to submit a formal request to the Director-General.

12. As at the cut-off date of this report, one OPCW staff member was deployed as part of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Supplementary resources

13. As previously reported, a Trust Fund for Syria Missions was established in November 2015 to support the FFM and other remaining activities, such as those of the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). As at the cut-off date of this report, the total contribution stood at EUR 11.5 million, with forthcoming additional donations.

Contribution agreements had been concluded with Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Monaco, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

14. Guided by Council decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 23 November 2015), as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM has continued to study all available information relating to allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic. During the period under review, the FFM continued to carry out its inquiries on credible allegations reported from December 2015 until the end of March 2017, on which information and materials are available.

15. The OPCW has also continued to extend its full cooperation and support to the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism.

Conclusion

16. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the activities of the FFM and on the implementation of Council decisions EC-83/DEC.5 and EC-81/DEC.4, including declaration-related issues, as well as on the confirmation of the status of the two stationary above-ground facilities, and annual inspections of the underground structures already verified as destroyed.